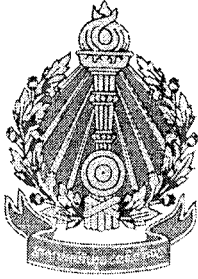
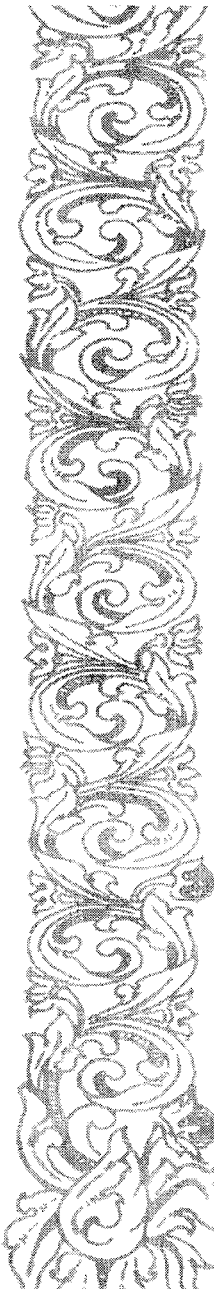


**KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA
NATION RELIGION KING**



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION YOUTH AND SPORT



GENDER POLICY IN EDUCATION

January 2010

PREFACE

The World has recognized that Education is a key to development. It encourages social stability as well as promoting investment in human resources. The advantages of education include potential to raise living standards through improved public health, greater employment opportunities, increased capacity for people to support their families, development of a social conscience and the opportunity to affect politics.

The quality and equity of an education system gives children, especially girls, a good start in life. They gain fundamental skills and knowledge to develop self esteem and the capacity to support a productive, healthy family life. Good quality education can lead to a society where people contribute to social development, freedom, democracy, safety and peace through reductions in areas such as: poverty, child labor, HIV/AIDS, discrimination, social and family violence. In recognition of the above benefits, the Royal Government of Cambodia, since 2000, has accorded one of its highest priorities to the continuous reform and development of the education system. In doing so it expects to develop the capacity of the nation to compete in domestic, regional and global markets which in turn will encourage foreign investment.

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport has created a framework for strategic development of education. This includes the National Plan for Education for All (EFA) 2003-2015, the Education Strategic Plan (ESP), the Education Sector Support Program (ESSP), and Program Budgeting (PB).

Within this framework a number of policies and intervention have been created to eliminate inequality in enrollment, retention and achievement between male and female pupils. However gender disparity is still a big challenge.

If you educate a man, you simply educate an individual, but if you educate a woman, you educate a family.

Education is vital to improving one's quality of life in terms of health, employment, living standards, sustaining the basic needs of the household and family. Good quality education empowers children – boys and girls - to become productive members of society.

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport hopes that all the key departments, institutions and development partners will work cooperatively to support and implement the Gender Policy in Education successfully.

Phnom Penh, 2010

Minister
Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport

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INTRODUCTION

According to the census of 2008, women comprise of 51.50%, of the population. They are a vital human resource that can contribute to national reconstruction, recovery and development. Women's participation in the labor market, particularly in garment factories, has helped poor households and families cope with the requirements of daily living. In other words, women have great potential to reduce poverty and in doing so help to eliminate many social problems such as child labor, HIV/AIDS and domestic violence. However women must be properly educated and equipped so that they can become economically and socially productive members of society, enabling the country to compete in domestic and global markets.

Gender disparities in the education sector in Cambodia are shown in imbalances in literacy rates, enrolment, repetition and drop-outs, promotion, completion and transition rates in school. For example, females lagged behind in literacy rates in 2007. Female literacy rates among those aged 15 years plus, were placed at 60.30 % in 2004 and 66.1 % in 2007. The UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) noted with concern the high illiteracy rates among women and disparity in school enrolment rates for males and females as well as the high drop-out rates of girls in some provinces.

Gender issues in education include lower female enrolment rates at secondary levels and higher drop out rates among girls, especially in upper secondary education; male domination of the teaching profession and low female representation in leadership and management positions in the education sector.

Although there have been serious efforts to achieve girls' full and equal access to education since 2003, this has not been realized yet. In general, there is gender parity at pre-school and primary levels but the situation is not the same at secondary level. Gender gaps in education are wider among the poor in rural, remote, and disadvantaged areas. Also, there is a significant drop in the proportion of enrolled girls in the higher grades of the primary school system. National figures show that the net enrolment rate of girls in primary education is 94%, lower secondary: 35 %, and upper secondary level: 15.7% (Statistics and indicators for 2008-09).

Late enrolment and early drop out of girls is associated with onset of puberty as family responsibilities begin to predominate. Some parents are often less willing to invest in educating females which is a critical factor when parental contributions are a large share of education spending, particularly at secondary level.

In short, there are a large number of reasons perceived to be the causes of gender gaps in management and the teaching profession. These include shortages of qualified women, lack of training among women, limited training opportunities. Females in remote areas have low education and therefore, have a reduced chance of being recruited and selected as teachers. Women lack confidence to take on high-level positions. Some education officers believe that women have limited managerial capacities and that women do not understand their roles and responsibilities as managers. Women have too much work; domestic burdens are additional to their work responsibilities.

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport understand that official approval of the gender policy in education is the right decision. It will help to promote gender equality. Therefore a range of policies, programs and activities need to be developed and implemented aimed at improving full and equitable access of all children to education, especially girls in the Cambodian society.

I. VISION

1.1 Vision

Eliminating gender disparities with a focus on full and equal access to basic education for all in compliance with the Constitution of the Kingdom of Cambodia.

1.2 Expected Outcomes

- a) ***Gender mainstreamed and integrated into all aspects of education plans and programs.*** Gender is a cross cutting issue in education and should be taken into account in all aspects of education plans and programs. Education officials at all levels, including partners in education in the communities, must understand and take action on gender issues in education. Gender concepts must be included in all programs, plans, projects, laws, rules and regulations pertaining to education.

- b) ***Creation of an enabling environment for gender mainstreaming and positive social attitudes toward gender equality and girls' education.***

Unfavorable attitudes and concepts related to gender in education must be examined, and addressed with appropriate solutions. Such adverse attitudes should be eliminated as much as possible. Leaders at all levels of education must recognize women's contributions and must give them appropriate encouragement. Support from the family, society, relevant institutions, organizations, and leaders should be extended to women in high level positions.

- c) ***Gender equity in education is achieved and ensures that girls have full and equal access to good quality education.***

Children, students (formal and non-formal), especially disadvantaged and vulnerable people have full and equal access to good quality education. Eliminate gender disparity in education. Promote gender parity in enrollment and transition rates. Advocate for more positive attitudes toward girls' education and gender equality in Cambodian society.

- d) ***Women's participation in the management and delivery of education services increased.***

Female officials in the education sector who have the capacity must be given priority to hold management roles at all levels, in accordance with the requirements of the departments or offices involved. Selection processes ensure that there is gender equity.

Remove or reduce obstacles to gender equity and promote female officials to undertake management and decision-making positions.

- e) ***Gender mainstreaming actions must comply with quality standards.***

Quality standards for gender mainstreaming shall be enforced by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport. Periodic assessments by the gender working group at all levels of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport shall be undertaken in order to monitor the implementation and the progress of gender policies and programs at all levels.

II- STRATEGIES

To implement the gender policy, all Departments and Institutions of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport are encouraged to use a variety of strategies, including:

Strategy 1: Research, Information Dissemination and Awareness Raising

- a. Obtain and manage data and information on the education needs and status of children and youth to ensure that data are disaggregated by gender for use in gender analysis. Improve the information gathering and analysis of data on early education. Compile information on early childhood and gender to inform parents and the community and encourage them to support the sustained development of early childhood programs.
- b. All institutions under the ministry must disseminate gender by all practical means possible, including books, brochures, bulletins, magazines, and the like.
- c. Institutions under the ministry at all levels must integrate gender concepts into all plans, projects, actions, laws, operating rules and other regulations.
- d. Compile and develop information, education and communication materials, including short stories, radio and TV broadcasts to demonstrate reduction of gender disparities in the family, society, and state institutions.
- e. Eliminate gender stereotypes and enhance positive attitudes toward girls' education and gender equality at all institutions under the responsibility of the ministry. The ministry must take part in all activities such as the national and international Days, School Days and the like.

Strategy 2: Lobbying and Advocacy

- a. Conduct workshops and round table meetings in order to advocate for more women in key management positions and to promote gender equity in management.
- b. Campaign for gender equality by showing models of good female leaders and heroines through posters, T-shirts, and education bulletins.
- c. Organize national competitions on gender concept. Use different modes of promoting gender issues, such as through poems, question-answers, *Yike* and *Ajay*, songs, comic sketches and the like.
- d. Encourage communities to establish literacy classes, life skills classes and equivalency classes to cater for the needs of those who are out of school, many of whom are females.

Strategy 3: Capacity Building

- a. Undertake research on gender issues in education to guide planning and programming processes. Collect, compile, organize, analyze and interpret gender statistics to assist in planning, programming, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of gender mainstreaming actions.
- b. Provide training on gender to officers at management level and the officials at all levels who design programs and action plans.
- c. Female officials in education shall be encouraged to enhance their capacity for decision- making and management skills and to take part in management activities.
- d. Provide continuing capacity building for male and female staff on children's education, foreign languages and computer skills.
- e. Provide training for officials at provincial and school levels on gender issues, as well as planning related to skill development for youth and children so that they can fulfill their personal potential: A good child, good student, good friend and good citizen.
- f. Increase youth's capacity in the use and application of modern information technology.

Strategy 4: Mainstream Gender in the Teaching and Learning Processes

- a. Line departments should collaborate with local offices of education in order to integrate gender concepts into the education curriculum at all levels as well as in education programs for government officials in the commune level. Develop and integrate gender in parent and guardian education programs for preschool children.
- b. Enhance the capacity of female teachers in both formal and non-formal education through distance learning and produce necessary teaching materials to support them.
- c. Improve the capacity of education officials in non-formal education through local and overseas training.
- d. Mainstream gender in *early childhood education* by providing gender education for parents who are involved in home-based teaching for their children. Expand the number of nursery and kindergarten schools. *At the primary school*, mainstream gender into teacher training, curriculum, text books, and methodology both formal and non-formal. Expand primary schools of all grades and establish lower secondary schools based in existing primary school locations in difficult and remote areas, especially in strategic locations which are convenient for students, especially girls, to reach.
- e. Create a gender friendly school environment by providing nutritional feeding programs, clean water, separate toilets and hygiene facilities for boys and girls. In addition, provide bilingual classes for ethnic minority pupils.

Strategy 5: Affirmative Actions

- a. Provide *more scholarships* and increase the share of women from 10 to 12 or 13 percent. In *Sports*, give scholarship to girls at schools who are capable and can become national sportswomen.
- b. Expand *day-care activities* and *home-based education* in order to help girls and women as mothers to be more confident in teaching their children.
- c. Speed up the construction of *dormitories for women*.
- d. Develop and implement a gender responsive youth education program.
- e. Expand *secondary vocational training schools* at province/city.
- f. Promote community work, especially male involvement in child care.
- g. Encourage women with managerial capacities to take part in management committees at all levels.
- h. Women in disadvantaged and remote areas who meet the selection criteria for teacher recruitment should be given the chance to teach in their respective home towns.
- i. Extend *non-formal education*, including literacy classes, post literacy classes, vocational training, and other classes, to women and girls who are out of school.
- j. Give *priority to women* in the selection of contracted literacy teachers.
- k. Expand *community learning centers* and develop skills in accordance with the needs of the poor in provinces and cities.
- l. Encourage girls to *participate in sports* competitions. Expand the quantity and quality of national sportswomen. Pay more attention to and expand sports activities to girls. Sports committees must involve women along with the men. All sporting activities must have men and women taking part in all fields in the 24 Capital/Provinces.
- m. *Award* outstanding teachers and students, especially female.

Strategy 6: Partnerships

- a. Forge partnerships with national and international organizations and persuade them to support the dissemination of gender information especially through the mass media. Lobby for more scholarship grants to women in disadvantaged and remote areas. This will support them to gain the education and training needed to enable them to become teachers of basic education in their respective areas.
- b. Officials at the provinces, cities/*khan* offices of Education, Youth and Sport and schools must collaborate with the community, local authorities, commune and *Sangkat* councils, parents or guardians in conducting research and collecting early childhood statistics for children at ages 0 – 3 years old and 3 – 5 years old.

- c. Local offices of education should establish linkages with factories and enterprises that have female employees with the view to establishing nursery, preschools and kindergartens to enable mothers to engage in productive work while the children are in school. In addition to this, local offices can link with technical institutions, departments, and development partners to build nursery and kindergarten facilities.
- d. Build linkages and networks and strengthen links among the youth in country and abroad.
- e. Collaborate with international NGOs to build up capacity of government officials at the community level on gender mainstreaming.
- f. Promote women's networks in the community in order to earn extra income for their households.

Strategy 7: Monitoring and Evaluation

- a. In the course of monitoring and evaluation at all levels of education pay attention to the special needs and concerns of women
- b. Include gender issues on the agenda of the annual Education Congress.
- c. Evaluate 1) the skill and capacity of female managers in technical work, planning, managing, and human relations; 2) gender parity in job promotion and male-female proportion in the membership of the staff evaluation committee.
- d. The management committee and the gender working group must inspect and evaluate the quality of gender mainstreaming programs and activities.
- e. Select qualified nursery and pre-school managers to ensure quality and efficiency of preschool education services.
- f. Gender working groups at central level, province/city levels must send reports on their gender programs and activities to the Gender Secretariat of MoEYS at the end of the first and second semester of each school year.

III- IMPLEMENTING MECHANISMS

Gender committees should be established where they do not exist yet. Such committees shall formulate an annual action plan which shall indicate the gender programs, expected results/outputs and budget to implement gender programs.

1. Establish implementing bodies at national and local levels and ensure clarity in their roles, responsibility, authority and accountability for gender mainstreaming. *Appoint and/or designate gender focal points* (i.e. officials who will take charge of gender programs) at central, provincial/city, district/Khan, and school level in order to facilitate gender mainstreaming in education *and build their capacity.*
2. All units and departments concerned shall *formulate and implement annual gender mainstreaming action plans at all levels.*

CONCLUSION

All departments and units of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport at all levels are encouraged to allocate funds from their respective budgets to implement gender programs. A portion of the Education Sector Support Program funds can be channeled for the implementation of gender mainstreaming as may be appropriate to each technical department of the MoEYS.

In addition, all departments and units are encouraged to initiate partnerships and linkages with donors in the private sector, local and international NGO's as well as UN agencies in order to mobilize necessary resources to implement gender mainstreaming activities.